

Message Text

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ACTION COME-00

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R 171300Z MAR 76

FM AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2836

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY ROME

UNCLAS DUSSELDORF 0343

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, GW

SUBJECT: GROUP TRAVEL: STATE OF OHIO

REF: (A) BRUSSELS 1654, (B) STATE 37959

1. OHIO GOVERNOR RHODES AND RETINUE DESCRIBED REF A VISITED DUESSELDORF FROM MARCH 9 - 11. TRADE MISSION SUBSEQUENTLY DISPERSED TO PURSUE INDIVIDUAL SCHEDULES INCLUDING A VISIT BY GOVERNOR AND PART OF DELEGATION TO WOLFSBURG (VOLKSWAGEN) ON AFTERNOON OF MARCH 11. AT MARCH 15 LUNCHEON WITH CONSUL GENERAL, OHIO-BASED STATE TRADE OFFICIALS DESCRIBED MISSION AS SUCCESSFUL AND EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR POST'S AND BONN'S ASSISTANCE DURING AND PRECEDING VISIT.

2. OHIO GROUP ARRIVED DUESSELDORF BY TRAIN AFTERNOON OF MARCH 9. THAT EVENING CONSUL GENERAL HELD RECEPTION IN HONOR OF VISIT ATTENDED BY ABOUT 75 LAND AND CITY OFFICIALS, GERMAN AND AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN.

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3. ON MARCH 10, GROUP WAS ADDRESSED AT EARLY MORNING

SESSION BY COMMERCIAL COUNSELOR, AMEMBASSY, BONN
ON SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN DOING BUSINESS IN
THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC. GOVERNOR RHODES LATER ADDRESSED
JOINT LUNCHEON OF AMERICAN CLUB, AMERICAN CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE, AND STEUBEN-SCHURZ SOCIETY ON, AMONG
OTHER TOPICS, ADVANTAGES OF DOING BUSINESS IN AND WITH
OHIO. THAT EVENING, OHIO DELEGATION AND CONGEN PERSONNEL
WERE GUESTS OF CITY OF DUESSELDORF AT A BUFFET DINNER
AT CITY HALL. SIX MEMBERS OF THE GROUP VISITED CONGEN
AND WERE ASSISTED IN ESTABLISHING CONTACTS WITH
POTENTIAL AGENTS/DISTRIBUTORS BY POST E/C STAFF. A
SHCHEDULED MORNING MEETING WITH NRW ECONOMICS MINISTER
(AND ACTING MINISTERPRESIDENT) RIEMER WAS UNFORTUNATELY
CANCELLED BECAUSE OF THE MINISTER'S SUDDEN ILLNESS.

4. ON MARCH 11, OHIO GROUP AND EMBASSY AND CONGEN
PERSONNEL, INCLUDING AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND, JOINED
APPROXIMATELY FORTY GERMANY BUSINESSMEN FOR A
WORKING CRUISE ON THE RHINE. MOST OF THE GERMAN
PARTICIPANTS WERE FROM NORTH RHINE WESTPHALIA,
(TWENTY-ONE OF THEM PREVIOUS CONTACTS OF THIS POST)
BUT SOME HAD COME FROM OTHER PARTS OF THE FEDERAL
REPUBLIC TO HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO MEET THE OHIO GROUP.

5. A MAJOR ASPECT OF THE VISIT OF GOVERNOR RHODES AND
OTHER OHIO STATE OFFICIALS WAS A TRIP ON MARCH 11,
TO THE VOLKSWAGEN HEAD-OFFICE AT WOLFSBURG (NIEDER-
SACHSEN). VW HAS BEEN CONSIDERING THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF A MANUFACTURING PLANT IN THE UNITED STATES AND HAS
EXAMINED POSSIBLE SITES IN OHIO, AMONG OTHERS. OHIO
HAS MADE AN ATTRACTIVE PROPOSAL, AND THE OHIO
OFFICIALS RETURNED FROM WOLFSBURG WITH INCREASED
CONFIDENCE THAT VW WOULD ACCEPT THEIR OFFER. A
DECISION IS EXPECTED WITHIN THE NEXT SIX WEEKS.

6. COMMENT:

CONGEN SHARES AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS' OPINION THAT NATURE
(AND SIZE) OF OHIO MISSION PROHIBITED MORE STRUCTURED
AND PROBABLY MORE PRODUCTIVE VISIT. HOWEVER, POST
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PERSONNEL WERE PLEASANTLY SURPRISED BY THE NUMBER
OF SUBSTANTIAL BUSINESS CONTACTS ESTABLISHED DURING
THE CRUISE AND THOSE MISSION MEMBERS WHO VISITED
THE CONSULATE GENERAL WERE PLEASED TO LEARN ABOUT,
AND AVAIL THEMSELVES OF, THE FACILITIES OF THE
POST AND THE ASSISTANCE OF THE STAFF. SEVERAL
MEMBERS OF THE OHIO GROUP EXPRESSED SATISFACTION
WITH THE RESULTS OF THEIR INITIAL APPROACHES TO

PROSPECTIVE AGENTS AND DISTRIBUTORS, AS WELL AS
DISCUSSIONS WITH PROSPECTIVE INVESTORS.

THE GROUP, WHICH INCLUDED SEVERAL OHIO BANKERS, ALSO
APPRECIATED THE OPPORTUNITY TO ESTABLISH CONTACTS
WITH GERMAN BANKERS AND TO DISCUSS FUTURE COLLABORATION
IN TRADE AND INVESTMENT MATTERS.DUX

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